BMHA Newsletter

BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA

Volume 10, Number 3 Jul/Aug/Sep 1999

HAMVENTION '99

BMHA's Tenth Forum Pleases Big Crowd

This year's BMHA Forum at the Dayton HamVention was, as usual, well-attended. The 65 people in the audience were there mainly to hear how a small crew of hams manages to control the 5,000 bike riders that annually enjoy pedaling the scenic back roads of southern Indiana. We're talking about the Hilly Hundred Bicycle Weekend, an event that for over 30 years has drawn cyclists from every part of the US to meet the challenge of cranking up those steep grades—and partying that night! The Director of Communications for the "Hilly", Barbara Anderson, N9XSS, gave a fast-paced presentation, ably assisted by Stu Sherfick, W9HRZ, and Dave Gerbig, WB9MZL.

The audience was evenly divided: half were BMHA members, half were not. Six of the latter group signed on as new members, making it a worthwhile recruiting activity. If you've never been to HamVention you should give it a try. We'd, of course, welcome you to the BMHA Forum, and to our Bike Ride (see page 2), but our program is just a tiny part of the activities that each year attract 30,000 hams from US and abroad to Dayton, Ohio. See you there next year!

----*Hartley Alley, NA0A*

Top left: Mike Nickolaus, NF0N, our able forum moderator. Mike managed to keep things moving so that we covered everything in the short alloted time.

Top right: the Hilly Hundred communications team. l-r, Dave Gerbig, WB9MZL; Barbara Anderson, N9XSS; Stu Sherfick, W9HRZ.

Bottom: Stu Sherfick at the mike during the Q & A session. We were assigned Room 2 again this year--a perfect meeting place.

HAMVENTION '99

Eighth Annual BMHA Bike Ride

Once again, the weather for the BMHA Hamvention ride in Tipp City, Ohio was near ideal. After some cool and slightly damp weather on Friday, Saturday afternoon turned out sunny and warm, with just enough of a breeze to make our return trip noticeably easier. Our group consisted of sixteen riders, with everything from the latest recumbents to a classic Raleigh that must have been at least as old as I. Just about every bike was radio-equipped, including at least three with HF rigs. For added drama, we were instructed by Hartley Alley to ride past his RV on our way out, while he stood on the roof taking what was sure to be a great photograph.

The pack, tightly grouped, leaving Tipp City Park.

(I had a much tighter shot than this lined up, but the camera failed to fire. The problem being I was testing a brand new point & shoot camera, and have to admit I don't yet know how to operate it. For 15 years, a long time ago, I made a good living as a freelance magazine photographer. I used Leicas and Nikons, cameras that YOU tell what to do—not a damn automatic that does what IT wants to do! –Ed.)

After starting, we got the best surprise of all: an HF band opening! Everything from 30m to 10m was hot. After only five miles, we stopped to make log entries. Russ Dwarshuis, KB8U, started by making CW contacts to the Gulf coast. Ben Lowe, K4QF, not only managed some European contacts (Denmark, I believe was the farthest) but also won the Tipp Cyclery T-shirt "I came the farthest to the BMHA ride" award for coming all the way from Alabama. We also had our first VE rider: John Cumming, VE3JC, who joined us from Delaware, Ontario.

We maintained a moderate pace, slow enough for some nice conversation (and HF work). We also made our usual mid-ride stop in Christiansburg for ice cream and/or snacks. Overall, it was about as good a ride as you can get in 27 miles. It'll be hard to beat, but we'll try next year.

----Jim Gumbert, NC8Y, Ride Leader
419 S. Third St.
Tipp City, OH 45371 Email: otown@infinet.com

EDITOR'S NOTEPAD

Maybe you noticed that this issue has a "different look". The only change is that we are running more photographs than usual. It's not the result of a definite plan---it just worked out that way. Should we continue with the 'new look', or should we go back to using photos more sparingly? We'd like your opinion on this. Please send your comments to me at the email address below.

BMHA Getting Ready for Y2K

Please look at your last mailing label from BMHA. If it shows that we have only a 5-digit zip code for you, please send the final four digits so that we'll have the standard 9-digit zip code for your mailing address. As a result, the mailing of the newsletter will be expedited.

In the same vein, please send in your latest, correct E-mail address. We'll soon be compiling the 1999-2000 E-mail directory of BMHA members. It will be mailed with the next (October) issue of the Newsletter. So time is short.

You can take care of the above matters by including the information on the blue card that you return with your check. Or, you can E-mail it to me at the address below.

Editor Takes Trip

My wife Jean, N0EOX, and I are getting ready to fly to England for a fall vacation. There'll just be the two of us---we won't be on a packaged tour. We've been there several times, usually with our bikes. No bikes this time. We'll be doing a bit of exploring in the East Anglia area, getting around mainly by local buses and trains—and of course by foot. We've made E-mail contact with the president of one of the important Brit ham clubs. He has given me a listing of all the club repeaters in the area, along with a list of people to contact on 2M and 70cm. We don't think we'll lack for company. If we do happen to, we'll just head to the nearest pub.

We Need Writers

Our inventory of articles on hand, to be used in future newsletters, is getting a bit thin. We need you to sit down and dash off articles on these subjects: Travel by bike; Reviews of new ham/bike gear; How you set up your ham gear on your bike; How you made an antenna for your bike; How your group provides ham communication for a cycling event. Or anything else you want to share with your fellow members. Send 'em in! We'll run 'em.

—Hartley Alley, NA0A, Editor
E-mail: hartleyal@aol.com

LETTERS

Happy News from Our Member in Israel

(This letter, dated May 1998, was temporarily "lost" when I bot a new PC and updated from Windows 3.1 to 95. I'm happy I could rescue it from oblivion. --Ed.)

Hartley,

Here's a bit of news from Israel. As you know, this year Israel celebrated its 50th anniversary as a country. Here in Tel Aviv, our local ham club ran a Special Event for that anniversary. As a result we members were all busy and tied up in the aftermath paperwork. Thousands of contacts came in looking for the special award for QSO's between Israel stations and DX stations from 1 Jan to 1 May 1998.

Special QSLs have been printed. Pileups were tremendous: last weekend I submitted 2000 QSLs to the bureau! This event forced me and many others to drop our pens and convert to computer logging.

I got a QSL from a Gzero (British) station—not a BMHAer, but bike-mobile with bike drawing on QSL. *(Teddy, send us his call and we'll chase him down. BMHA needs a British member.)*

Homebrew 2m Antenna

I now commute regularly to my job, with HT operating, thanks to the small size of my handheld dual band STANDARD C508A, and thanks to a home-made telescopic rear-mounted antenna. I improvised the antenna by just soldering a regular telescoping (and swiveling) FM radio antenna to a PL-259 connector. I measured VSWR and marked the correct length (50cm exactly) for 1/4 wave on 2 meters and 3/4 wave on 440.

Since the antenna can also swivel and fold down, it does not constitute any hazard and can be left permanently on the bike. It is mounted on a SO-239 socket fitted into the metal back-rack. The same socket can support a Diamond NR770 antenna, with better performance.

Performance with the telecopic is reasonable. Copper wire radials pushed into rear saddlebags, produce further improvement. 440 performance is somewhat degraded because of unstreamlined profile of the FM antenna. I made a similar antenna from a single metal rod, which performs much better at 440. However, the rigid, non-telescopic structure of the latter, makes it too awkward for daily use.

The tiny C508A fits into the translucent map compartment of the handlebar bag. Thus it is in full view, and buttons can be pressed thru the nylon. It is also reasonably protected this way from rain.

(I asked Teddy if he had any good "saved by HT" stories. Ed.)

As for "saved by HT" stories: I have only these:

1. After uneventful commuting from job to home, I got stuck in my QTH's narrow elevator, hands occupied holding the bike upright. HT mounted on handlebars came in VERY handy. I just called my wife Nava, 4Z5IQ, on 2meters and she came and opened the elevator door.

2. Joined a tour along the Yarkon River. Near the end, we had to cross the water waist-deep. Afraid for the HT, I decided not to cross, and turned back. Later it was discovered that the water there is heavily polluted.

3. Rode with daughter Liora in this year's "Round the Galilee" tour . We did not join the crowds: instead we rode some 40 kms along the cool streams that later join to form the Jordan River. Most of our ride was looking for stream-crossing points in a "trial and error" mode. The weather forecast was for blistering, 33 centigrade heat, *(90 Fahrenheit)* and we dressed accordingly. The actual WX was a cool 18 centigrade *(64 F)* with light rain. Summoned XYL on the HT to bring us clothing: Liora was already turning blue, HI. Now properly dressed, WX was perfect for riding.

4. Almost lost job, HI: Honked at a driver holding up traffic, using my loud electrical horn mounted on handlebars . Turned out it was my boss in his other car.

73,

Teddy Neeman, 4Z5JQ
POB 65078
Tel Aviv, 61650, Israel teddy@teledata.co.il

A Scary Night Ride

Dear BMHA Members,

I'd like to tell you about a strange biking incident that I had this fall.

I was taking a casual evening ride on a road that I'd often been down before. I saw a small street off of that road and decided to investigate. It was dark and I had my headlight and taillight turned on. However, my headlight is bright but small so I can only see what is directly in front of me. There were a few homes and after I passed them I saw a farmer's field with something growing in it. At the end of the street was a house on the right hand side. The street ended in a wide circular turn around.

As I approached this area, I saw a pick-up truck pulling into it. A man got out of the pick-up truck, looked at me, and said, "Are you the police?" I said "no." He said, "Are you sure you're not the police? You sure look like you are." (I have a luggage rack on the back of my bike with the same kind of bag that the police in our area use.) I told him that I was sure I wasn't the police. He said, "You better not be the police because they've been snooping around here lately. Didn't you know that this is private property? Didn't you see the signs?" I told him that I did not see the signs (it was too dark).

At this point I suddenly realized that what I thought was a street was this man's *driveway!* He basically told me to leave and believe me, I didn't mess around, I left as fast as I could. I figured he was either mentally ill or doing something illegal. Either possibility seemed bad because I thought he still believed I was the police. On the way down the drive I noticed that he had his headlights on and aimed at me. Then, after I turned unto the main road, I was chased by two dogs, one on each side of the road. I could only hear them, I couldn't see either of them. Eerie. Needless to say, I have tried to do most of my riding during the day since this incident.

--Carol Childers, KC8CEX
21 Kleber Ave.
Austintown, OH 44515-1734 bassoon2cc.aol.com

TIPS & HINTS

50-foot Tower: You Carry on Your Bike

For the members who not only bike but camp in remote locations I offer a suggestion. Two Meters is often handicapped by the old line-of-sight limitation. If you can handle an additional three pounds or so, Hastings Fiberglass, of Hasting MI makes a line of telescoping fiberglass poles. These are made for the communications and electric industries to measure ground clearance. The ones I have used collapse to a five foot length, but extend to as much as fifty or more feet. With one of these poles, you attach almost any 2 meter antenna, a light weight feed line, some light weight guy lines, and in an instant you have added 25 miles to your range.

Dave holds a fiberglass pole. If fully extended, it would reach up to 50 feet. Next to it is a 13-foot-6 antenna that he wrote about in the July 1996 issue.

When you're ready to break camp, you just collapse the pole and tape it to your top tube. The best part, utilities replace these poles every few years, fearing insulation breakdown of the fiberglass. Believe me, at over 200KV I get nervous even with new poles. The used poles can be obtained free, or at very little cost, and are perfect for ham applications, since we don't need the high level insulation protection.

These poles are made for the utilities, both power and telephone. Used to measure the ground clearance of aerial cables, they often make contact with high voltage. For that reason they have an insulation value of over 100KV *per foot.* That value is good: I have touched 345KV transmission lines using the pole. When new, these are expensive, about $300 for a 40-foot pole. The best way to acquire one is to become friends with a power or telephone engineer. They use these poles and often manage to break them. The breakage normally happens to a small hook that's used to hold the pole on an overhead line. We hams do not need that hook, we can even get along without the top section or two as that top section is not strong enough to support much. So I suggest you and the other BMHA people seek out used poles.

Now the proper use of the pole. For a field day dipole, I tie both ends of the antenna to convenient trees, then use the telescoping pole to raise the center insulator and feed point. Tie the center of a light weight rope to the center insulator and you then use that rope to guy the pole at right angles to the antennas. This four-way anchoring (two antenna legs and two rope legs) works well. If you have one of the truly long poles (over 50 feet) a three- or four-way guy point can be established at a mid point of the pole with three or four ropes and a good application of strapping tape. The telescoping nature of the poles makes this easy because the larger diameter lower sections hold your guy point up where it is needed.

For a two meter or other small antenna, simply brace the lower portion of the pole to a tree or fence, but just remember to take it down when (hopefully before) the wind becomes too strong!

The newer poles collapse to about four feet. Older ones collapsed to about five feet, but when the Ayatollah turned off the oil supply, Big Mamma Bell bought, for us engineers to drive, a bunch of Gremlins, which were too small to accept the five foot poles. There may be some of the five footers available hiding in the back rooms of engineering offices.

These poles are of a reasonable weight, just a few pounds, depending on length. As a working engineer I never carried one more than a few hundred yards. None of my engineering friends carried them very far either, apparently some of us never carried the pole all the way back to the company car, either. That explains why I now have three.

—Dave Gerbig, WB9MZL
3504 S. Tremont Way
Bloomington, IN 47401-8995

HAM RADIO HAZARDOUS TO YOUR LIVER?

We don't have the typical "soccer mom" minivan, but occasionally my wife will use my car (it is a station wagon, and seats more kids than her car) to help with a school field trip. She returned from the last outing chuckling under her breath. It seems that one of her friends saw the car's license plate (AA6WK), and confided that "I didn't know that Skip was recovering from a drinking problem..." Not knowing about callsigns, and certain that the plate meant something, my wife's friend invented a meaning: She was sure that it was a 'badge of accomplishment' for finishing an AA program in only 6 weeks! Now if only my plate could have read "CW6WK". I'd sure like to have gotten that Morse Code requirement done so quickly!

—Skip LaFetra, AA6WK, Sunnyvale CA

NEW MEMBERS

We're pleased to add these names to our Membership List:

Fred Beihold, NK1L, 57 Charles St., Auburndale MA 02466
Carol Childers, KC8CEX, 21 Kleber Av., Austintown OH 44515
Kevin B Haywood, N4QVC, 100 E Pointe Cir., Kathleen GA 31047
Gary D Krause, N7HTS, 7003 Bonneville Pl., Cheyenne WY 82009
Frank Lugar, KB0NVL, 210 W. Winona, West Saint Paul, MN 55118

Michael Markowski, KD7BOD, 1064 E Wilson, Salt Lake City UT 84105
Bob Marshall, 3116 Coolidge, Royal Oak MI 48073
James Prest, WA8SEL, 24485 Glen Orch. Dr., Farmington Hills MI 48336
Eugene Skopal, AE2F, 47 Stormytown Rd., Ossining NY 10562
Norman Swanson, KF6GOF, 11526 Palito Ct., San Diego CA 92127

With traditional ham friendliness, make contact with these new members, welcome them to BMHA, and help them with any problems they might have.

REMINDERS

BMHA Net...Now on 40

Freq: 7.042 khz (Up 3, if QRM)
Time: 0200 UTC
Date: Every Wednesday (Tuesday evening in the US.)

Jim Varner, AE6N, will monitor and call CQ BMHA at regular intervals on 7042 khz at 0200 UTC for 45 minutes. Mike Nickolaus, NF0N, will call the net on those times when Jim is away from his QTH.

For Sale. Do you have bicycle-mobile-related radio equipment for sale? Send in a description and we'll run it. Limit of 20 words, plus your name, address, phone. For members only.

Back Issues Still Available. You may purchase any of the 35 back issues of the BMHA NewsLetter for $1.50 each, postpaid. For info on the contents of the various issues send a business-size SASE to: BMHA, POB 4009, Boulder CO 80306-4009, and ask for the Index of Back Issues. This service available to members only.

If you tell us your bike tour plans we'll publish them in the NewsLetter and help make it possible for you to meet fellow BMMHAers in person or on radio as you pedal along. Just send in your route and the dates.

When you write a plug for BMHA (and please do!) in your local club's newsletter, be sure to include this information: "The annual dues is $10. To receive a sample copy of the BMHA Newsletter and other bike-mobile info send an SASE to BMHA, Box 4009-RC, Boulder CO 80306." This will save our club a lot of trouble and expense. Info will be sent next day.

Here's a quick, slick way to tell potential members about BMHA: have them connect with our website at:
htttp://www.lafetra.com/bmha/

BMHA NEWSLETTER

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Mike Nickolaus, NF0N Bob Pulhuj, KE8ZJ
Chairman and Founder: Hartley Alley, NA0A

BMHA NEWSLETTER, a quarterly publication of the Bicycle Mobile Hams of America -- Jan, Apr, July, Oct.

We welcome articles, suggestions, letters, announcements, photos, artwork — anything pertaining to the combining of bicycling with amateur radio.

The BMHA is affiliated with Adventure Cycling Assoc., League of American Bicyclists, and *Worldradio*.

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ABOUT BMHA

For the information of our first-time readers

Bicycle Mobile Hams of America got its start when a 'Stray' in the June '89 QST magazine asked to "get in touch with hams who operate their radios while bicycle-mobile", signed by Hartley Alley, NA0A. Twenty five hams responded, filled out questionnaires, and received a summary of the collected data.

In April of '90 we had our first BMHA Forum at the Dayton HamVention. We played to a packed house, overflowed the room, and added 54 names to our mailing list. Our eight subsequent forums have drawn increasingly larger audiences, and now BMHA is firmly established as a 'regular' at this world-renowned event.

This is the thirty-sixth issue of our quarterly newsletter, which has become *the* clearing house for the exchange of info and ideas for the hams who go on the air from their bicycles. Since the last issue of this newsletter we have added 10 new members. The total membership now stands at 472, with members in 46 states, and six countries. BMHA is affiliated with Adventure Cycling Association, the League of American Bicyclists (LAB), and *Worldradio*.

BMHA membership puts you in touch with a friendly and helpful group of bike-riding hams. You'll make contacts through our membership directory and E-mail address list, our HF net on 40 meters, annual meeting and Forum at the Dayton HamVention and other regional meetings, and of course through the BMHA NewsLetter, which has articles on bike trips, antennas, other gear, operating tips, etc. Membership application blank on next to last page.

HF WORLD

Eight Bands on Two Wheels!

(This article, the first of a two-part series, appeared first in the QRP Quarterly, *Oct. 1998. This piece, a condensed version, appears here with the permission of the author. The second part of the series will appear in an upcoming issue.)*

I enjoy combining QRP with cycling. In the summer of '98, I achieved all-band QRP capability (both SSB and CW) on the mountain bike, without compromising riding comfort and safety.

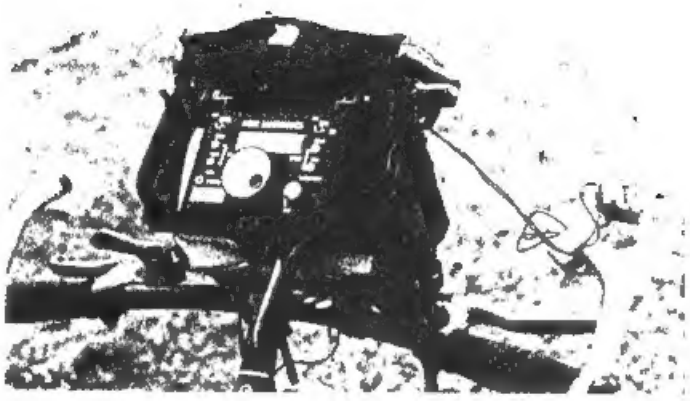
My equipment:

- well-used 18-speed bike (purchased about 12 years ago for under $200)
- Index Labs QRP-PLUS transceiver, original version, with no internal mods (4-5 Watts on CW, 2 Watts on SSB).
- Outbacker Perth 75-10 M Antenna
- flea market special speaker-microphone
- Mini CW Paddle by Gil Kost (American Radio QRP Key Co.)
- 7 Ah sealed lead acid battery

The transceiver is mounted in a handlebar bag, angled so the front of the rig is visible and controls accessible while on the road. The bag also holds a small logbook, pencil, and microphone.

While some bicycle mobilers use a single earphone (leaving the other ear for road traffic), I haven't been using *any* earphones. Instead, a "deflector" (half of a plastic project box) installed on the radio directs audio from the top-mounted speaker. Most of my riding is on back roads, but I find it surprisingly easy to copy even in the presence of cars and cows! Incidentally, I operate CW 95% of the time.

The Outbacker antenna is mounted about one foot behind the back wheel, on a 1-in. diameter aluminum tube. With the antenna so far back, I can mount and dismount the bike normally without kicking the antenna. Even bonded to the rest of the bike frame, the Outbacker's "stinger" must still be extended to almost maximum length in order to achieve



The QRP-PLUS with "Audio Deflector" above it.

Sending CW -- with the operator's hand close to the brakes!

resonance on most bands. Although there is some sway in the antenna, I hardly notice it while riding.

The aluminum tube attaches to the bike frame by sliding into two plastic brackets originally used for carrying heavy duty bicycle "U-locks". The tube is anchored to the rear rack using an "inverted" mobile antenna bracket and a good old Canadian hockey puck for shock absorption. Removal takes only thirty seconds: Undo the butterfly nut and slide the pole assembly back. The aluminum pole was cut from a folded dipole element of an old commercial antenna. I retained a bend at the end of the pole which permits mounting of a super-bright LED flashing/solid bike light.

The 7 Ah battery handles power requirements for a weekend bike trip and rides in one of the rear pannier bags. Several 6-inch "two sided" Velcro straps securely route the power cable and RG-58 coax to the handlebar bag and permit quick removal of the radio equipment.

CW Operation

After installing the main components, a number of "SWL" rides verified the mechanical security of the system. Then the final goal: CW transmission! I had read that some bicycle-mobile CW ops have switches in each handlebar

(continued on next page)

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extension (dit with left thumb, dah with right thumb), but this did not appeal to me. I wanted to be able to (safely!) send in a "normal" iambic fashion, so the beautiful mini-paddles from Gil Kost was used. The paddles are mounted on a small bracket on the end of the right handlebar extension. My wrist remains on the handlebars, so steering, shifting and braking are still convenient. It is a bit of a challenge to send good CW while riding on a gravel road, but other operators will be forgiving of the jittery fist when they hear you are bicycle mobile.

The QRP-PLUS transceiver is an excellent bicycle mobile performer. My bike has no front shocks, the rig feels every bump! Yet the dial on the QRP-PLUS is solid; the frequency does not change even with severe bouncing on bad roads. Most settings are adjusted on the QRP-PLUS by spinning the main tuning dial while one or two buttons are pressed. When bicycle mobile, I am able to change them "on the fly" using just one hand. The memory button is especially useful for quickly switching between two favorite frequencies on the band being used. To change to another band, you need only a 15-second stop to change taps on the Outbacker antenna.

Bike mobile QRP may not appeal to those who like to keep their rigs in mint condition. Regardless of how much padding you use, bumps and scratches are inevitable. But in my opinion, scratches on field radios show they have character! Trail- and bike-friendly radios want adventure!

I have borrowed many of the above ideas, and a great deal of inspiration, from a number of bicycle-mobile hams. If you hear me on the air "/QRP BM", please give me a call!

—John Cumming, VE3JC
192 Wellington St. Email: jbcumming@wwdc.com
Delaware, Ontario, Canada N0L 1E0

HELP WANTED!

Ham Support for Greater Hartford Marathon

Last year, I provided ham support, using my bike-mobile Automatic Position Reporting System (APRS), for the Greater Hartford, CT, Marathon. *(See his article in the Jan. '99 issue. --Ed.)* This year's event will be held on October 9th, and we could use some more bike-mobiles to cover the event. The race course goes through some park areas that are not accessible to cars, so bike mobile units are very useful, especially if they're equipped for APRS. Road bikes can be used since the paths are paved. The lack of APRS equipment shouldn't hold back any potential volunteers. There are enough extra units around to set them up.

If you are close to the Hartford, CT, area and think you might like to help, give me an e-mail. I'll fill you in on the details of the event.

—Dave Reed, WA1ZWG (wa1zwg@aol.com)
Niantic, CT

My Latest Downfall

Crashing is not unusual for me. The most embarrassing crash was when I came to a red light at an intersection. A police car had pulled up behind me and I thought I would demonstrate how a cyclist could do a standing stop. The problem was the light never turned green and I can only stand so long. My shoes were firmly locked in as I rolled over in front of the squad car.

The latest crash came as a surprise, as all crashes do. One of my favorite rides is where I start out from the house with 2.7-mile climb followed by two miles of down hill. It was this down hill that got me. At the bottom of the hill I had to make a 100-degree left turn and start another climb. Now if you can make that turn at 30 to 35 miles per hour, you have a good start up the next hill. I was coming down this hill at 25 plus miles per hour and an on-coming car was making a right turn. I thought I would turn in behind him with no problem. For some reason the driver of the car decided to slow down making me swing wide to

(See CRASH, next page)

Membership Application

MemAPPL3.wps 3 14 98 /pc /newmem /pec /newHAM /NONham /news /Q's /rost /wstc /env

BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA date_____
Box 4009, Boulder, CO 80306

Individual $10_____ (US or Canada) new member?_____ renewal?_____

Family $15_____ (limit: two persons) Foreign $15_____ Donation $_____

Make check payable to BMHA, in US dollars or international money order.

Name_____ Call_____

Address_____ License Class_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Age_____ Most miles bicycled in one day_____

BMHA's Official Logo

The next time you need to order new QSL cards, don't forget to include the BMHA logo in your design. Here's the official logo, as designed by Russ Dwarshuis, KB8U.

BMHA NEWSLETTER

Bicycle Mobile Hams of America
PO Box 4009
Boulder, CO 80306-4009

First Class Mail

COMMENTS

....I got rear-ended in my van at a red light about a month ago. I'm still having some trouble with my neck, can't ride my bike for very long. So I thought I may as well make use of the time by trying to figure out a way of mounting my rig and antenna on my bike. I note that the back issues have articles that will help me get started. Enclosed find list of 10 back issues that I would like to order. I'm looking forward to reading them. Hopefully, when my neck is more normal I'll be ready to become bicycle-mobile.
----Carol Childers, KC8CEX, Youngstown OH

....In the article by Bil Paul, KD6JUI, in the July '98 issue he suggests using a Ham Stick antenna for bike-mobile use. I suggest that you can get better performance by using TWO Ham Sticks, or, one Ham Stick and a Hustler coil and tip for a counterpoise. As most of us members know a bike frame doesn't have enough metal for a good counterpoise.
----Dave Holesovsky, K0IPH, Loveland CO

....I'm working on getting my code speed up so I can upgrade to General and check into the BMHA net. Combining biking and hamming is a great idea. Besides my bicycle, my other favorite vehicle is a good old English car, a 1979 MGB roadster. I noticed in QRZ.com that a certain call is not in use so I filed for the vanity call of N4MGB. It came in the mail just yesterday! How lucky can you get!
----Kevin Haywood, N4MGB, Kathleen GA

(CRASH from prev. page)

go around him. There is one spot in the road which has a rough surface. I hit this spot and my front wheel lost traction and I crashed. I mean crashed hard. My helmet was cracked open, bike handlebars looked like a pretzel. And I had a sharp pain in my shoulder.

I learned a couple facts from this crash. One, is that helmets work. Two, after age 65 one does not bounce so well. I managed to ride the bike with the pretzel bars home. The XYL took one look at me and rushed me to the hospital. X-rays were taken and I was checked over. The doctor said being a bicycle rider I would heal fast (thanks!), but the pain in the shoulder didn't go away. A couple months later a MRI was taken and the bad news was that I had to have rotator cuff surgery. It has been eight weeks since my surgery and I am still waiting to get back in the saddle.

The Raleigh 300 with the pretzel handlebars was repairable. I had just taken a course at United Bicycle Institute in Ashland Oregon so it was fun rebuilding the bike. Then I asked my son-in-law if he had good medical insurance and gave him the bike. I am now the owner of a Trek 520 with no scratches on it... yet.

At age 65 I am still learning. This crash could have been avoided if I had been a little more cautious. Another note, I did have a 2 meter radio with me and could have called my XYL, KC7GYT, for help but didn't want to alarm her. The radio bounced better than I did and was not damaged.

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